

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 were previously pending in this application.

Claim 4 stands objected to.

Claims 1-8, 12-13, 17, 19-20 and 22 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,144,102 issued to Amagai ("Amagi").

Claims 1-8, 12-14 and 17-22 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,303,878 issued to Kondo et al. ("Kondo").

Claims 1-8, 12-14 and 17-22 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,242,815 B1 issued to Hsu et al. ("Hsu").

Claims 15-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo, or Hsu as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,492,714 B1 issued to Kasatani ("Kasatani").

Applicant thanks the Examiner's indication that claims 9-11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Allowable claim 9 is cancelled without prejudice in favor of claims 1, 4 and 19 as amended hereby.

Claims 23-25 are allowed.

Claims 1, 4, 10, 19, 24 and 25 (re-numbered) are amended.

New claims 26-27 are added.

No new matter is added.

Claims 1-8 and 10-27 remain in the case.

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims in light of the above amendments and following remarks.

Claim Objections

Claim 4 is objected to. Claim 4 is amended to replace "enhanced" to --enhanced pad-to correct an idiomatic error. Thus, the claim objection is now overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102(b) and – 35 USC §102(e)

Claims 1-8, 12-13, 17, 19-20 and 22 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Amagai (6,144,102).

Claims 1-8, 12-14 and 17-22 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Kondo, et al. (6,303,878 B1).

Claims 1-8, 12-14 and 17-22 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Hsu, et al. (6,242,815 B1).

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 4 and 19 are amended to include the limitations drawn from allowable claim 9 in an effort to expedite the allowance.

Accordingly, amended claims 1, 4 and 19 are now allowable. Also, claims 2-3, and 8, 12-14; claims 5-7; and claims 20-22, which depend from allowable claims 1, 4 and 19, respectively, should be in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 15-16 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo or Hsu as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Kasatani.

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable and, therefore, claims 15-16, which depend therefrom, are allowable for their dependency and their own merits.

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8 and 10-27 of the application as amended is solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

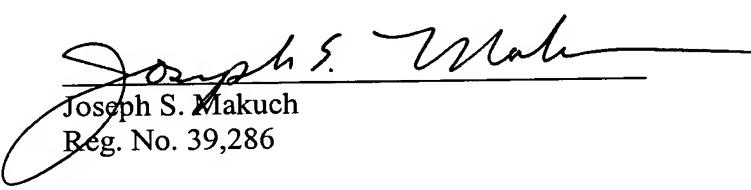
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Respectfully submitted,

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